



ACRPC

update

February 2011

ACRPC Self-Assessment Survey

As part of its ongoing efforts to improve its operations and focus, the Addison County Regional Planning Commission will be asking its commissioners and staff to take a self-assessment survey. This online survey will be available beginning the evening of ACRPC's

February 9 full commission meeting through March 31, 2011. The survey may be taken online anytime (and from any location) during that period. For those without Internet access or with poor connectivity, ACRPC will also supply a workspace where people may take the survey at ACRPC's offices. Please call Adam at 388-3141 make an appointment or to use ACRPC's workspace.

Commission Calendar

February 2011	9	7:00pm	Full Commission Meeting
	11	8:15-10:00am	ACTR Board Meeting
	14	4:30-6:30pm	Addison County River Watch Collaborative Meeting
	15	4:00pm	Energy Committee Meeting
	16	4:00-5:30pm	ACORN Wholesale Collaborative
	16	7:00pm	Transportation Advisory Committee
	17	7:00pm	Addison County Solid Waste Management District Meeting
	19	10:30am-2:00pm	Farmers Market Annual Meeting
	23	7:00pm	ACRPC Executive Board Meeting
	23	5:00pm	Local Emergency Planning Committee, VT State Police Barracks
	28	5:00-6:30pm	ACORN Network Board Meeting

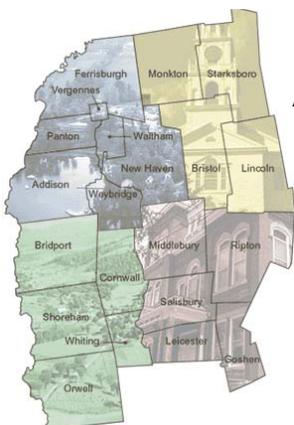
New PACE Financing Legislation Introduced in Vermont Legislature

PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy) is a financing mechanism that allows municipalities to assist property owners to invest in energy projects using financing that is repaid through assessments on property tax bills over a 20-year period. In doing so, PACE overcomes a key financial hurdle for many who wish to make investments in energy projects.

On January 31st new PACE legislation (bill H.155) was introduced in the Vermont House of Representatives. This "PACE 2.0" bill is intended to address the concerns of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, to align more closely with PACE statutes in other states, and to make the program viable for Vermont communities. Specifically, the bill has language that:

- Makes the PACE lien junior to existing mortgages. This would comply with the secondary mortgage bankers' concerns.
- Builds a loan loss reserve fund. A mandatory loan loss reserve fund will reduce lender risk by covering the assessment in the case of foreclosure. Property owners taking advantage of PACE would be required to pay a small amount into this fund.

Meetings are held at ACRPC, 14 Seminary Street, Middlebury, and are open to the public.



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- Require that the PACE assessment be current in the case of foreclosure. Instead of the municipality taking on the remaining balance in full, only the outstanding PACE payments would need to be paid up to date. The remaining balance, like the energy savings, would continue with the property to the next owner.

For more information or questions, contact Regional Planner Kevin Lehman at 388-3141 or kevinl@acrpc.org. Input on the bill (www.leg.state.vt.us/docs/2012/Bills/Intro/H-155.pdf) can be offered through state senators and representatives.

Local Emergency Manager Qualifies for Certification

At the January 26th meeting of the Addison County Emergency Planning Committee (ACEPC), a Local Emergency Management Director from Cornwall was recognized and awarded a certificate from Vermont Emergency Management. The certificate is awarded upon completion of 8 classes totaling over 40 hours in the subjects of Mass Care, Hazardous Materials, Incident Command, Emergency Management and Disaster Software Reporting.

Kate Gieges, Cornwall's appointed Emergency Manager, is one of the region's most dedicated and one of only 10 EMDs in the entire state to have received this level of certification. In her term, she has managed to create a cohesive group of volunteers and town employees that regularly meet to conduct emergency planning in Cornwall. In awarding of the Level I EMD Certificate, the State of Vermont recognizes her commitment to making the Town of Cornwall well-prepared for unforeseen disasters.

Congratulations Kate!

Opportunity for Major Savings on Municipal Building Energy Audits

ACRPC has funding to help towns pay for energy audits on municipal buildings, including schools, town halls, fire stations, town offices, library, etc. The audit covers the building's thermal envelope, heating and cooling systems, maintenance needs, and lighting. The audit report offers recommendations on energy saving measures to implement. Municipal buildings are often older structures and the potential for energy and costs savings is great. The cost to the town for the audit (including an historic survey report) is approximately \$250. Contact Regional Planner Kevin Lehman at 388-3141 or by email at klevinl@acrpc.org for more information.

New Book: Raising Money for Local Land Projects

Christine Graham, a consultant to nonprofit organizations, recently published *Raising Money for Local Land Projects*, a basic how-to book designed for community groups trying to fund conservation projects. Opportunities for land purchases often arise suddenly, and community members do not have experience or a proven donor-base on which to turn. This booklet offers instructions on organizing your team, raising money, and meeting your goals to conserve your land. For more information, visit <http://www.cpgfundraising.com/>

ACRPC is ordering a copy of the book.

Free Agrosecurity Workshop

*Fri., May 13 and Sat., May 14
Franklin Center, Rutland*

A 2 day *Strengthening Community Agrosecurity Planning* (S-CAP) workshop is part of an ongoing effort to improve our region's resiliency to hazards associated with agricultural disasters. Extension dairy specialist Julie Smith recognized gaps in our preparedness level in the agricultural sector. She will run a pilot project

Events / Grants

directed at establishing plans and protocols that could protect our agricultural community.

While most emergency planning tends to focus on the human side of disasters, this workshop will focus on how farms can protect themselves from disease and how local communities can help. Without advance planning, the impact of disease on our farming community could be disastrous.

The workshop is designed for Emergency Managers, Veterinarians, Public Health, First Responders, Farmers, AG suppliers, local government officials and others who are interested. To find out more, contact Tim Bouton at 388-3141 or tbouton@acrpc.org.

Public Meetings on the Vermont Public Transit Policy Plan

*Hannaford Career Center (Vermont
Interactive Television), Middlebury
Wed., Feb. 2, 7:00pm*

Come share your views on public transit services and needs in Vermont. Public transit plays a vital role in the high quality of life that Vermonters enjoy. The Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) is updating their Vermont Public Transit Policy Plan (PTPP) and is seeking input. The purpose of the PTPP is to review and update transit policies and goals and to develop strategies to meet current and emerging public transit challenges over the next 10 years.

As part of this process, VTrans is holding a series of public meetings to help shape the vision for the state's transit system and to identify and explore issues that should be addressed to realize that vision. A second round of public meetings in November will present the proposed plan to the public and interested parties and to gather public comment.

For more information, contact: the PTPP Web Site:
<http://www.kfhgroup.com/vermonttransitplanupdate.htm>

Better Buildings By Design Conference

*Sheraton Conference Center, Burlington
Wed., Feb. 9 and Thurs., Feb. 10, all day*

Learn from leaders in the design and construction fields about the latest techniques and technologies for superior building efficiency, performance, and value. Features over 30 presentations and over 50 exhibits attended by area architects, builders, contractors, designers, developers, electricians, engineers, and others. Costs \$275 for both days or \$175 for one day. Hosted by Efficiency Vermont. For more, visit www.efficiencyvermont.com/conference or call 877-248-9900.

Transportation and Community Character

*Dana Auditorium, Middlebury College
Thurs., Feb 10, 7:00-9:00pm*

Join Walter Kulash, a specialist in the rapidly emerging field of livable traffic design, will present recent projects that incorporate the principles of livable traffic throughout the U.S. and Canada. Author of the book, *Residential Streets*, Kulash is in the forefront of the field of traffic calming: changing motorist behavior through street redesign. He is an engaging speaker who addresses problems common in many Vermont towns, including avoiding sprawl, dealing with the effects of disconnected street networks, and creating the transportation systems necessary to support walkable neighborhoods and shopping districts. Hosted by Town of Middlebury and Middlebury College. For more information, call Chris Robbins, Middlebury Planning Commission, 388-1952.

Solar Hot Water Presentation

*Ilsley Library Conference Room, Middlebury
Wed., Feb. 16, 7:00 - 9:00pm*

Learn how to navigate the maze of solar options, incentives, and installers for heating water. Hosted by Acorn Energy Co-op and sponsored by ACRPC. Call 385-1911 for more information.

Grants

\$100,000 for Grass Energy Pelletization and Market Development

The Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund (VSJF) released a new RFP (Request For Proposals) for the research and development of a pelletizing system capable of processing grass fibers into fuel.

VSJF is seeking proposals that will lead to the design, fabrication, demonstration and use of a mobile or stationary pelletizing system capable of converting at least one ton of grass biomass per hour into densified fuel. Projects must be able to identify at least one in-state source of grass biomass that will be pelletized and at least one in-state end-user of the pelletized fuel.

Any organization, farm, individual or business that maintains an active and physical presence within Vermont is eligible to apply for these funds. **The deadline for proposal submissions is February 28, 2011.** To download the RFP, application, and instructions Visit the VSJF website at <http://www.vsjf.org/>

School Community Garden Mini Grants

Friends of Burlington Gardens has announced that forty \$1000 mini-grants will be awarded this spring to groups developing or expanding school community gardens in Vermont. **The deadline for submitting online applications is March 15.** Mini-grant award recipients will be announced on April 12.

The mini-grant program provides reimbursements for garden infrastructure, including topsoil and compost, water systems, fencing, raised bed materials, hand tools, wheel barrows, and garden signage. The goal is to develop sustainable garden sites that will serve Vermont schools and communities for many years.

The grant's purpose is to establish a state-wide, school-based gardening initiative that teaches Vermont children and youths how to grow fresh produce using land on or adjacent to public school campuses.

For application details and to register online for a mini-grant workshop, visit the Friends of Burlington Gardens web site at www.burlingtongardens.org. Contact Land Use Planner Claire Tebbs for technical support (388-3141 or ctebbs@acrpc.org).

SBA Disaster Loans Available in Vermont

Federal economic injury disaster loans are available to small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives and most private non-profit organizations of all sizes located in Addison County.

These Small Business Administration (SBA) loans are intended to address the effects of frost, freeze, high winds, hail, excessive snow, excessive rain and cold temperatures that occurred Feb. 15 - May 12, 2010.

Farm-related and nonfarm-related entities that suffered financial losses as a direct result of this disaster are eligible. With the exception of aquacultural enterprises, farmers, ranchers and agricultural producers are not eligible to apply to SBA.

The loan amount can be up to \$2 million with a 4 percent interest rate for small businesses, 3 percent for non-profit organizations and terms up to 30 years.

Disaster loan information and application forms may be obtained by visiting the SBA's website at www.sba.gov, calling the SBA's Customer Service Center at 800-659-2955, or sending an email to disastercustomerservice@sba.gov.

Completed loan applications must be returned to SBA no later than August 17, 2011.